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SOME POETRY FROM MY NAVY DAYS

A COLLECTION OF POETRY

WILLIAM DIRK MAYBERRY

POETRY

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Written by William Dirk Mayberry

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PREFACE

This small book is a collection of poetry that I wrote while I was in the Royal Australian Navy. From 1985 to 1989, I wrote some of the poems while serving on various HMA Ships and then a few more while I was laid up in a hospital after I was involved in an accident in 1989.

We all take inspiration from various influences in our lives. As a young child, I was always fascinated by paper, pencils, fountain pens, ink, journals, diaries, and various types of literature. Later as I traversed my school years, I would sit at a very luxurious desk, my father had purchased for me to do my homework. It had many draws and secret sections for me to store my tools for writing. It's gone now as with most things only meant to be with us for a part of our life, but I always have such fond memories of sitting at that desk and writing.

With such a privileged life as a young boy, lucky enough to have earnt some form of pocket money through doing chores, chopping wood, selling plants, or cutting the neighbour's lawn, I always spent my money on writing and literature of many kinds, as well as music. I would sit in my room for hours, writing, reading, listening to music and dreaming of what my life would become. Thanks also to my mum, who introduced me to God, I have always been a believer. I think the first place you meet God is in your heart and there was plenty of room for him there along with my passion for writing. The Navy made us worship, but for me, I wasn't made, it seemed to me, like my writing, was just a normal part of my life. I am not saying that I was a saint in my younger years, perhaps more of a sinner but I never stopped believing, all be it, quietly and in my heart. A few years ago, my mum and dad moved out of their house to downsize. While visiting them one day, mum was packing and came into the dining room with a coffee for me and an old Grace Brothers shopping bag. I was quite surprised when I looked in the bag as there folded neatly and in their original envelopes was every single letter I had written while in the navy along with all the letters from my mum, grandparents Romviel and Mayberry, including letters from my siblings. It has dawned on me, that since leaving school, while in the navy and during most of my life till now, there was always writing and God in my life. I feel lucky that I have been blessed to have had both things as part of my life for so long.

Robert Louis Stephenson, perhaps an unusual inspirational person for a young sailor, was to me, a man who had lived the life I had always dreamed of as a child. Visiting Samoa on one very interesting naval adventure I can vividly remember looking out over

the vast Pacific Ocean from Robert Louis Stephenson's former residence. Surrounded by beautiful gardens, and the jungle mountains, my love of all things writing strengthened my resolve as a writer to keep going. Since this visit, my passion and love of writing has never left me. Perhaps like Stephenson, I too imagined myself living in a tropical paradise, travelling, and experiencing life's offerings, while all the time penning away with only the surrounding environment, my imagination, and experiences to guide me.

Sometimes in life, and with the grace of God, our dreams come true, and we find ourselves where we were always meant to be, doing what we were always meant to do. I now have the life I have always wanted, a wife I have always needed and a place where all I do every day, is write.

Alhamdulillah
(All praise is due to God)

MY INSPIRATION

Robert Louis Stevenson
1850 - 1894

"The difficulty of literature is not to write, but to write what you mean; not to affect your reader, but to affect him precisely as you wish." - **Robert Louis Stevenson**

Robert Louis Stevenson was a Scottish author, poet, and travel writer. He was born on November 13, 1850, and passed away on December 3, 1894. 73 years before my birthday. His masterpieces "Treasure Island" and "The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" are the ones that brought him the most fame. Stevenson was an author who was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. He had a difficult upbringing due to his bad health, and as a result, he turned to write as a method to express himself. He had his legal education interrupted when he decided to pursue a career in writing instead. While he was away, he visited places like France, the United States, and the South Pacific, all of which served as sources of creativity for his work. Although he was afflicted with tuberculosis, Stevenson managed to generate a substantial body of work that included essays, poetry, and short tales. He had gone to Samoa, in hopes of finding a climate that was more conducive to good health, but he passed away there at the age of 44. His novels are still read by a large number of people and have been adapted for the theatre and the movies. Today, Robert Louis Stevenson is known as one of the great writers of English literature.

The name "Vailima" was given to the residence that Robert Louis Stevenson owned in Samoa. It was a sizable estate situated in the hills above the nation's capital city of

Apia. The land featured the primary residence as well as several other buildings and was enveloped in jungle tropical gardens on all sides.

Robert Louis Stevenson on his veranda in Vailima, Samoa, 1893

The house was designed by Stevenson himself, and he and his family resided there from 1890 until the time of his passing in 1894.

Robert Louis Stevenson was well-known for his love of travel and his adventurous and exploratory spirit. He was an avid writer, artist, and architect who possessed a wide range of skills. As a man of many talents, Stevenson was also known for his generosity and kindness to those who were close to him, even though he had achieved great success as a writer. He was known for being humble and down-to-earth. He was a deeply religious man who believed in the importance of compassion and justice, and he used his writing as a platform to address social and political issues of the day. When Stevenson moved to Samoa, he quickly became well-liked in the local community and became well-known for his advocacy on behalf of the native population. Robert Louis Stevenson was a multifaceted individual who left an indelible mark on the world through the writing he produced and the character he portrayed.

MY NAVY DAYS

1985 was an interesting year for many reasons. The Greenpeace ship “Rainbow Warrior” was sunk in Sydney Harbour by French Special Forces. Actor Rock Hudson died from AIDS. The first British mobile phone call was made by Ernie Wise to Vodafone. TV show, "The Golden Girls", aired for the first time. The Internet's Domain Name System was created, while a little known 17-year-old Boris Becker celebrates as Wimbledon men’s singles championship winner. Not wanting to take anything away from Boris, and perhaps a less historical event than winning Wimbledon, was becoming part of another generation of Mayberry’s to join the navy.

I joined the navy on April 9, 1985. As with most males in my family, that meant a journey down to HMAS Cerberus. I was 17 years old, just. I was not old enough to drink a beer legally. I was also not old enough to vote. Apparently though, I was old enough to put on the Queen’s uniform, now the Kings uniform, fight and die for my country. While dying for my country was not on my bucket list, without any help from the navy or a foreign enemy, I must say this almost happened a few times and mainly due to my own inexperience being an adventurous person and getting myself into some interesting and challenging situations. Luckily though, and by the grace of God, I made it through my navy days. Perhaps coming out the other side, with a nice limp, walking a bit slower and a little bit banged up and bruised, but that story’s in another one of my books. Just Google “The Longest Way Home” by W. D. Mayberry, to read that life changing story.

After my training, I was posted to HMAS Vampire, where I spent 3 months waiting for HMAS Hobart to return from the United States of America. Once it did, I posted onboard and spent about thirteen months travelling around Australia and Southeast Asia. I was then posted to HMAS Cook in 1987. On Cook, I travelled around the pacific visiting most places along with a few trips to far North and far South Australia, New Guinea and one trip back to Southeast Asia again. In 1988, with my sea posting time complete, I was posted ashore to HMAS Cerberus. In 1989, while travelling home to Canberra, I was involved in a serious motor vehicle accident and spent my final days in the navy at The Royal Canberra Hospital, The Royal Military College Duntroon 5 Camp Hospital and my final posting to HMAS Harman. From there I was medically discharged from the navy in 1992.

During my time in the Navy, I took to writing poetry. This book is a chronology of my travels through my poetry. I don’t include all my poetry as some are quite personal and

were written more as a form of expression at the time, not for public consumption. My poetry was written on various topics, which mainly depended on what was happening in my life at that time.

I hope you enjoy some of the pieces I have written over my 7 years of service in the Royal Australian Navy.

1985 – HMAS Cerberus
1985 – 1986 – HMAS Vampire
1986 – 1987 – HMAS Hobart
1987 – 1988 – HMAS Cook
1988 – 1989 – HMAS Cerberus
1989 – 1992 – HMAS Harman

Poetry

by

W. D. Mayberry

CLASS

18 December 1985

The other day I walked past you,
your hair so blonde your eyes so blue.

The way you move,
the way you talk,
displays the class that you were taught.

I wish we were together now,
but this can never be,
It's sad to me and deep inside, I now can truly see,
for you and me to be as one can never really be,
From where you're from as you are you,
while I am always me.

Each born into a different class,
our hearts will never know,
the warmth of feelings in my dreams,
the different class not shown.

And to our folk, it would seem so wrong,
our hearts would never lie,
however true our feelings are,
I wake, my dreams, they die,
now awake, I can see, that we will never share,
as socially our class wins out,
our class cannot compare.

So, you and I must be content, with walking past and by,
a look, a smile, a little wink,
but never must we try.

ONCE A DREAM

24th April 1986

An autumn leaf floats down a stream,
reminding me of once a dream,
to have a friend who was loyal,
a friend to trust,
a friend to spoil.

A friend to talk to when I needed,
a friend whose thoughts were always heeded,
a friend to love,
a friend to hold,
a friend with whom I could be bold.

A friend who mattered,
that I would choose,
a friend whom I would never lose,

So, my fondness grew and grew,
that's right my friend,
my dream came true,
the very moment, I met you.

THE START OF HIS ADVENTURE

12th April 1986

A young lad from York in England,
Arthur was his name,
in 1938, Arthur he did trade,
the land of sheep and clover,
for the land of roo and drover,
a land of rich green pastures,
to a land of droughts disaster,
from a land of waters quarter,
to the land of fire's torture,

He came here for excitement,
and the folk law mystery,
to see the vastness of a land so wild,
yet strangely calm and free.

He arrived here on a cruiser,
travelled far but always free,
so far from his cliffs of Dover,
passing through the Tasman Sea,
the cruisers berth was Sydney,
and ashore at circular quay.,
his bearings fixed,
his kit bag packed,
his journey mostly made.

At Martin Place he ate a meal,
then that night upon the train,
he sat travelling to the meeting place,
and Canberra was its name,
a farm near there his destiny,

a place for him to stay,
a place for him to work for coins,
where wearily, he could lay.

So, as he finished telling me,
he looked at me to say,
the times I've had, the good, the bad,
somewhere, sometimes, the splendor,
I look back now and realise that,
  this was the start of my adventure.

THE END

5 May 1986

One day soon the clock will stop,
and on the ground, someone will drop,
to our earth,
it’s deadly stop.

Then no more brother will I have,
no more sister, Mum, or Dad,
my friends will all turn into dust,
gone by the way, the drop, a must,
our home a pile of smoky rubble,
forests of old, just ashen stubble.

Why can't we all just live in peace,
the fall out will pollute,
our piece on this earth will fade away,
more and more dilute.

Biologically we’re all the same,
but cultures differ some,
the powers that they will unleash,
all men, they must sucome,
so soon upon the ground will drop,
this world we know,
its deadly stop.

THE GIRL I LOVE

5th May 1986

She is everything I've looked for,
you mean everything to me.

Your hair is soft like silk velvet,
for your eyes glow constantly.

My love your soft and loving words,
make me feel so warm,
and if you lost your love for me,
my heart would be just torn.

I hope that never another man,
with me would he compete,
because my love without your love,
my life can’t be complete.

So never let our love go away,
because I love you so,
With all the love I feel for you,
I’ll never let you go.

UP IN THE MOUNTAINS

6th May 1986

Up in the snow-capped mountains,
where the mountain goats run free,
two squirrels run along the branch,
of an old oak tree.

Where the water runs so crystal clear,
the bobcat stalks its pray,
this place is where mother nature,
has laid her head to stay.

Cause here man has not tampered,
with this gift she gave to earth,
just now a young doe lays upon the lush green grass,
to give her young one birth.

I cannot tell you where it is,
because I don't know myself,
but up in the snow-capped mountains,
where the mountain goats run free,
two squirrels run along the branch,
of an old oak tree.

WAITING FOR THE END

15th August 1989

With my friends all dead, around me now,
they put me in a cage,
and no more future will I have,
no stripes or big parades,
I now exchange them all you see,
for bars and bamboo sticks,
and constant yelling from the guards,
and beatings with their sticks.

They keep me in the present now,
through their torture so harsh and cruel,
with rats in bags upon my head,
they bite and always nore,
my flesh their precious jewel of life,
The pain I can't ignore.

My food is nothing special,
just some rotten fish in rice,
I consider myself so lucky,
if something crawls into my life.

My country asks for call to arms,
And gladly, I did comply,
But now they have forgotten me,
And left me here to die.

THE TRACKS

8th September 1989

A long way from Australia,
are the graves of many men,
there lay a many fallen soldier,
from a wars old prison camp.

The soldiers fought for Australia,
but the British made the pain,
after all these years have passed us by,
the loss is such a shame.

The diggers made build a bridge,
that's destined not to last,
the life was hard and bloody rough,
the Japanese so harsh.

I've been to where the bridge is,
and it almost made me cry,
because of all my fellow diggers,
handing in their pics, to die.

The railway still stands as built,
but a third bridge stands today,
the blood-stained sleepers filled with tears,
will never fade away.

God bless those Aussie souls,
who were treated worse than dogs,
the heartless race, these Japanese,
and many men were flogged.

A man called Stanley Cregan,
a gunner in this hell,
has told me of the pain,

he’s still suffering, unto this hell,
he was treated like a dog once kicked,
and worked so close to death,
but God saved his soul,
he made it through,
and I am glad of it.

Today in ward 3A,
he lies right next to me,
and may God bless his loving soul,
may we never forget our diggers,
who had fallen on that track,
especially all of Stanley's mates,
who never made it back.

DEAR NAN

11th September 1989

The life I have, so crystal clear,
to me my nan you are so dear,
you've seen the seasons,
leaves to fall,
and in that time, you've helped me more,
more than you will ever know,
gifts to make my stay seem short,
your company so irreplaceable,
so irreplaceable and sought.

Thank you, Nan, for all you've done,
your kind warm and full of heart,
and thanks to you, my dear old nan,
my life can now restart.

We've always been so close somehow,
but you should never shed a tear,
because years from now I will remember,
and I will not forget,
may nan was always there,
you always knew,
you always helped,
my nan, you always cared.

THE FESTER

11th September 1989

The fester is a sort of bug,
the sisters try to stay away,
they wear their gowns,
and get their masks,
and don’t forget their gloves,

The festers life is shortened,
With a small, like super drug,
it’s like a sort of poison,
that kills the scoundrel bug.

The fester lives in prison RCH,
in solitary confinement,
the fester and its victim wait,
until the super drugs alignment,
and after time the fester dies,
the patients sentence served,
the patient's first thing he does,
is smoke the smoke deserved.

The fester gives up unto the sky,
and gets a pair of wings,
it flies around in heaven,
awaiting souls to sting.

THE LITTLE THINGS WE OFTEN DO

11th September 1989

The little things we often do,
so easy at the time,
until such time our numbers up,
and fall from grace we do,
now these little things we did,
we can, no longer do,
like tie my shoes to cut the lawn,
like walk the dog or prune a tree,
these little things, we once did well,
well no more, can we.

But soon we heal, forget, and walk,
the pain and hurt are gone,
the months and weeks of grinding bones,
the awful muscle creeks,
the weeping wounds upon my leg,
the wounds that always leaked,
it's all forgotten, gone by the way,
we walk upon the street,
we sigh and smile and walk some more,
and pray of no repeat.

The little things we often do,
we can surely do again,
the nightmares come,
they stay with me,
but it's not the same,
as I sit and ponder days,
of all the awful pain.

Remembering the time when,
I couldn't even tie,
my shoelace up and lying there,
I wished hard that I would die.

1915

8th October 1989

When I was just a young lad,
the Army gave to me,
my very own adventure,
and a three o three.

We ended up in trenches,
fighting with the Turk,
and every time the whistle blew,
you'd hear bullets hit the dirt.

The trenches that we lived in,
They never let us roam,
there for death extensions,
reminding us of home,
those mates we had as comrades,
some didn't make it back,
because of Turkish bullets,
they stay dead upon the track.

I'm alive to tell this tale,
but many men are not,
I only pray to my dear God,
they'll never be forgot.

HIS GALLANT MATE

8th October 1989

By the roadside sits a drover,
with his gallant make called roo,
out along the bush track,
where dust hides a sky so blue.

The rover’s face is wrinkled,
his skin so hard and rough,
each wrinkle tells a story,
so bold and very tough.

His good mate roo beside him,
man's best mate a dog they say,
but in this case, it's sure,
roos beside his mate to stay.

The drovers walked so many miles,
so many miles in life,
a life as an adventure,
full of laughter, fun and strife.

He’s worked on many stations,
he has earned a quid or two,
he loved but once but had to go,
his relationship fell through.

The drover doesn't wash or shave that much,
but still hold his head up high,
because the one thing that he’s learnt in life,
is keep your pride and try.

As he lays his head to sleep,
a blanket to keep him warm,
his eyes they finally close,

with roo beside the sleeping drover,
he falls so fast asleep,
And dreams a drover's dreaming,
of all those bloody sheep.

AN AVERAGE DAY

18th October 1989

The water laps the shoreline,
and the mangrove branches sway,
the cloud dispersed,
the sunshine shows,
and makes an average day.

Once we die,
whatever's next,
life seems to carry on,
because if they stopped for every death,
well, all they do is morn,

So as not to be forgotten,
And have the buried memory fade,
this poem shall now be written,
and in practice it will stay,
in the memories of a good friend,
a relative or two,
and don't forget to try to hide,
the fact that very soon,
the life you have may soon be gone,
perhaps to make more room.

So, everyone can carry on,
their time is now you see,
we'll surely make more room for them,
and they for theirs to be,
no matter who we are,
we can never really stay,
the best that we can hope for,
is another average day.

PAUL

15th November 1989

Your life cut short,
so sad to see,
my good mate Paul, no longer be,
so young you were,
so young you die,
I'm left here speechless,
I wonder why.

For one so kind to others,
happy memories do I see,
so kind and open hearted,
and always kind to me.

When someone leaves so soon,
so soon and such a shame,
but there you go away from us,
for heaven now to claim

A friend I had,
sadly, no more,
shall I ever see,
my good mate Paul,
goodbye my dear friend Paul.

MY MATE DAD

12th December 1989

My dad to me is everything,
a real good friend and mate,
I hope that you forgive me,
when sometimes, mistakes I make.

A dad to me should be one,
whose love is always there,
perhaps not in his presence,
but he always seems to care.

A dad is such a special friend,
to whom I can confide in,
one who offers free advice,
that always seems to do,
advice that helps you when in doubt,
and always gets you through.

Sometimes it seems, I get mixed up,
in all things and another,
but when I look across your way,
you always seem to bother,
to have the time to chat to me,
and try to set me straight,
my dad you always have the time,
you always give not take.

So, thank you dad because to me,
you've always been a mate,
your thoughtfulness and funny jokes,
your bubbly happy ways,
the ways when I was so very young,
you'd bounce me on your knee,
I'd laugh with always asking for,

one more ride on old GG.

You see my dad, I won't forget,
fun times, now in the past,
the love I have for my old dad,
the love shall ever last.

About the author

William Dirk Mayberry is an Australian writer and independent digital publisher based in West Java, Indonesia. Writing across fiction, memoir, essays, educational works, self-help, and reflective nonfiction, his work explores memory, resilience, observation, and everyday human experience through a direct and personal style. His interest in storytelling began during his service in the Royal Australian Navy and later developed into a growing catalogue of independently published digital works released under the Java Free Press imprint. His publications include memoirs such as The Longest Way Home, children's stories from the Bag Chip Bird series, practical educational titles from the 101 Self Help collection, and speculative fiction projects including the Crononaught Collection. Influenced by writers such as Robert

Louis Stevenson, his work combines realism, introspection, and accessible storytelling across a range of genres and formats.

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